

Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 1 February 1990

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Prices of manufactured goods rise

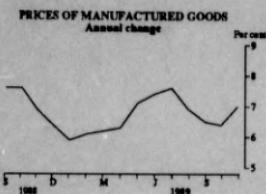
Prices of manufactured goods rose by 0.6 per cent in November, resulting in the annual rate of increase rising to 7.0 per cent.

The annual rate of increase had previously come off a peak of 7.6 per cent in July to reach 6.4 per cent in October.

The movement in November mainly reflects higher prices for refined petroleum products (following recent increases in crude petroleum prices), which contributed 28 per cent of the total increase in the ABS index.

Among a large number of other price rises, the most significant were for industrial machinery and equipment and sheet metal products.

The table below shows how price movements for the output of various sectors of manufacturing has differed significantly over the last year, with the largest annual increase being for chemicals and petroleum (9.1%).



PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, NOVEMBER 1989
Percentage change

Manufacturing sector	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Food and beverages	0.3	8.1
Clothing and footwear	0.1	7.3
Chemicals and petroleum	2.1	9.1
Basic metal products	-1.0	5.8
Fabricated metal products	1.3	8.4
Transport equipment	0.7	5.9
Other industrial machinery	0.8	4.6
<i>All manufacturing industry</i>	0.6	7.0

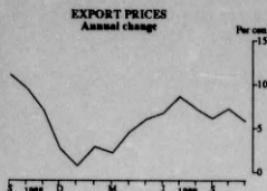
For further information, order the publication Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia (6412.0) or contact Peter Cordy on (062) 52 5541.

Fall in export prices

Export prices fell by 1.7 per cent in November 1989 resulting in the annual rate of increase falling to 5.8 per cent.

Approximately 55 per cent of the items in the ABS Export Price Index recorded price falls in November, while about 24 per cent recorded price rises.

Continued ...



Most of the price falls were for metals and metal ores, although sugar prices also contributed to the overall fall, reflecting falls in world prices. The main metals and ores to record decreases were alumina and aluminium ores and concentrates; and zinc ores, metals and alloys. None of the price rises recorded were significant.

EXPORT PRICES, NOVEMBER 1989
Percentage change

Commodity	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Food and live animals	- 1.3	15.7
Crude materials	- 1.8	- 0.5
Mineral fuels	- 0.8	19.6
Animal and vegetable oils	- 2.3	- 17.7
Chemicals and other manufactured exports	- 2.3	1.4
<i>All exports</i>	- 1.7	5.8

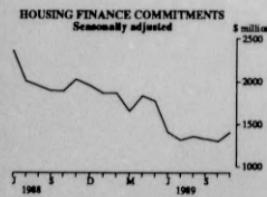
For further information, order the publication *Export Price Index, Australia (6405.0)*, or contact Peter Cordy on (062) 52 5541.

Banks boost housing finance against trend

Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for November 1989 totalled \$1405.9 million, a rise of 8.2 per cent compared with October 1989.

The rise was, however, against the general downward trend since June 1988, and the November 1989 figure was 29.4 per cent lower in seasonally adjusted terms than commitments in the same month last year.

The increase was confined to the banks, which had lending commitments of \$1156.2 million in seasonally adjusted terms, an increase of 14.0 per cent on October 1989. In contrast, commitments by permanent building societies decreased by 20.5 per cent and other lenders decreased by 3.6 per cent.



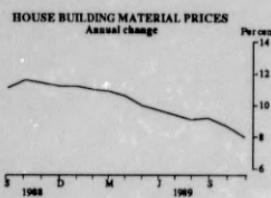
HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS, NOVEMBER 1989
Seasonally adjusted

Type of lender	\$ million	Percentage change from	
		Previous month	Corresponding month of previous year
Banks	1156.2	14.0	- 28.1
Permanent building societies	117.8	- 20.5	- 59.3
Other lenders	131.9	- 3.6	40.2
<i>Total commitments</i>	<i>1405.9</i>	<i>8.2</i>	<i>- 29.4</i>

In seasonally adjusted terms, the number of dwelling units financed increased by 2000 dwellings (10.3%) over October 1989. Compared with November 1988, however, the number of dwelling units financed fell by 10,500 (32.8%).

For further information, order the publication Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (5609.0), or contact Mark Dennis on (062) 52 7117.

Low rises in building material costs: ... house building



Prices for house building materials increased by 0.3 per cent in November, while the annual rate of increase fell to 8.0 per cent.

The decrease in the annual rate continued the downward trend evident since October 1988, while the monthly increase was the lowest since May 1987.

As in previous months, Perth recorded an annual rate of increase well above the average while Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart recorded rates below the average.

The November increase reflects small increases in a wide range of materials. The main price increases were for clay bricks in Brisbane and structural timber in Melbourne and Brisbane.

PRICES OF MATERIALS USED IN HOUSE BUILDING, NOVEMBER 1989 Percentage change

City	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	-0.2	8.2
Melbourne	0.8	6.7
Brisbane	0.7	8.6
Adelaide	0.2	7.5
Perth	0.1	10.6
Hobart	0.6	7.1
<i>Weighted average of six State capitals</i>	0.3	8.0
Canberra	0.6	8.3

Continued ...

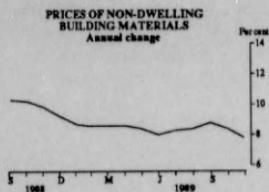
... other building

Prices for building materials used in non-dwelling construction increased by 0.4 per cent in November.

The annual rate of increase fell to 7.8 per cent (the lowest rate since October 1987), continuing the overall fall in that rate since September 1988.

The main price increases in November were for copper electrical cable and circuitry reflecting the higher recent prices for copper. Joinery products and ready mixed concrete also recorded significant price increases.

Brisbane was the only city that recorded an increase significantly above the national average of 7.8 per cent, while Hobart was significantly below it.



PRICES OF NON-DWELLING BUILDING MATERIALS, NOVEMBER 1989
Percentage change

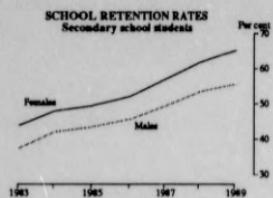
City	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	0.3	7.4
Melbourne	0.4	7.9
Brisbane	0.6	9.4
Adelaide	0.5	7.3
Perth	0.3	7.9
Hobart	-0.1	5.4
<i>Weighted average of six State capitals</i>	0.4	7.8
Darwin	0.5	6.3
Canberra	0.4	8.0

For further information, order the publications Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0) and Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities (6407.0), or contact Peter Sturgeon on (062) 52 6198.

Slower change in student numbers

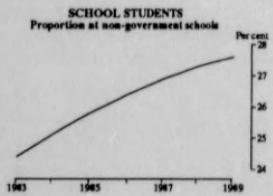
The number of students attending Australian schools crept up marginally last year, and non-government schools slightly increased their share of the total numbers.

Preliminary results of the July 1989 schools census show that 3,031,387 students were attending school full time in that month — an increase of 9,058 or just 0.3 per cent from the previous July.



As the chart at left shows, the strong rise in the apparent retention rate (the percentage of secondary students staying on until Year 12) of recent years showed no signs of abating. In fact the retention rate, combined for males and females, rose from 57.6 per cent in 1988 to 60.3 per cent in 1989.

The number of students at government schools fell by 3,348 (or 0.15%) while those at non-government schools rose by 12,406 (or 1.5%). The net result of those changes was that non-government schools increased their share of students from 27.3 per cent in 1988 to 27.6 per cent last year.



The position is similar with the number of schools and numbers of teaching staff employed in them. Nearly three-quarters of the 10,038 schools in operation were government schools, and they employed 146,957 (full-time equivalent) teaching staff compared with non-government schools' 51,611 teaching staff.

Thus while teacher-pupil ratios were marginally lower in non-government schools, the ratio was approximately 1:15 in both sectors.

The annual schools census is the result of co-operation between the ABS and Commonwealth, State and Territory education authorities through the Australian Education Council Schools Statistics Committee. More detailed final results of the 1989 census will be released a little later this year.

SCHOOLS STATISTICS, JULY 1989

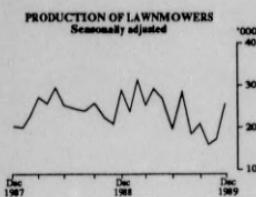
Number	Government schools	Non-government schools	All schools
Schools	7,515	2,523	10,038
Students ('000)	2,194	837	3,031
Teaching staff ('000)	147	52	199

For further information, order the publication *Schools, Australia, Preliminary (4220.0)*, or contact John Sever on (062) 52 6304.

Manufacturing: the scorecard for December

Up 14
Down 11

Fourteen of the twenty-five seasonally adjusted categories covered by the monthly survey of manufacturing production showed rises in December.



The largest percentage increase in manufacturing output in the month was for petrol-rotary lawn mowers (up 47.7%). However, this rise in production of mowers was not enough to halt their recent downward trend, and production remained 11 per cent lower than in the same month last year.

Production of wool woven fabric and man-made fibre fabric increased by 31.5 per cent and 19.7 per cent respectively. These rises were sufficient to restore production in the weaving industry to higher levels than a year earlier.

As the table below shows, the major falls occurred in the production of domestic refrigerators, portland cement and motor vehicles for the transportation of goods and materials. In each case, production was also below the levels of a year earlier.

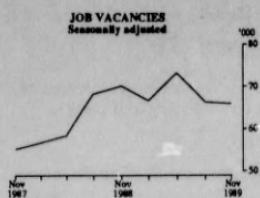
PRODUCTION OF COMMODITIES RECORDING SIGNIFICANT
MONTHLY CHANGE
Seasonally adjusted

Commodity	Unit	Production in December 1989	Percentage change from previous month
<i>Increase</i>			
Lawn mowers	'000	25.6	47.7
Woven fabric —			
Wool	'000 sq m	894	31.5
Man made fibre	'000 sq m	17,310	19.7
<i>Decrease</i>			
Refrigerators, domestic	'000	22.9	- 22.1
Portland cement	'000 tonnes	548	- 16.4
Motor vehicles for goods and materials	'000	2.23	- 15.8

Twelve of the twenty-six categories for which original data are available for both December 1988 and December 1989 showed increases over the twelve months, while the remaining fourteen recorded falls.

For further information, order the publication Production Statistics, Australia, Preliminary (8301.0), or contact Tony Hunt on (062) 52 5558.

Job vacancies steady . . .



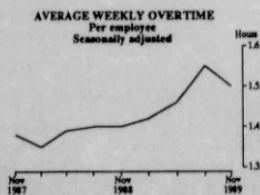
The number of job vacancies in Australia declined by a marginal 0.6 per cent in seasonally adjusted terms between August and November 1989.

The estimate of number of vacancies on the survey date of 18 November was 66,000, compared with 66,400 in August.

Seasonally adjusted figures are not available by industry sector or State, but in original terms private sector vacancies, at 43,400, were at their lowest level since the 42,100 recorded in May 1988.

The manufacturing and community service industries showed the biggest contraction of vacancies in November, down by 2,000 and 1,900 respectively.

. . . while overtime levels fall



Average weekly overtime per employee fell between August and November after seasonal adjustment — down 3 per cent from 1.55 hours to 1.50 hours.

Of interest in the original series (which, for the record, reached its highest level at 1.60 hours since the series began in 1983) was a widespread increase in overtime in manufacturing, in conjunction with the fewer job vacancies in that sector.

For further information, order the publication *Job Vacancies and Overtime, Australia (6354.0)*, or contact David Martyn on (062) 52 6572.

Another small price rise for manufacturing materials

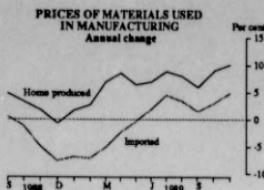
Prices of materials used in manufacturing industry increased by 0.2 per cent in November following a rise of 0.1 per cent in October.

The main price increase in November was again for crude petroleum, reflecting higher world prices. Sheep and lamb prices also showed significant increases, recovering in part from the price falls of earlier months.

Further significant price decreases were recorded for cattle where seasonal factors resulted in increased domestic supply and lower prices. Falls in the prices of zinc concentrates were also significant.

The table below shows the impact of these price movements on imported and home produced materials.

Continued ...



PRICES OF MATERIALS USED IN MANUFACTURING, NOVEMBER 1989
Percentage change

Source of material	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Imported	0.1	4.8
Home produced	0.2	10.0
Total	0.2	8.2

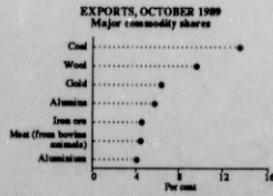
The annual rate of increase in November rose to 8.2 per cent, sharply up on the 6.7 per cent recorded in October. The continuing rise in the annual rate of change reflects the fact that in October and November 1988 the index recorded price falls.

For further information order the publication Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia (6411.0), or contact Kevin Norton on (062) 52 5637.

Export commodity details

Exports for October 1989 were \$4,103 million, virtually unchanged from the figures for September.

Major exports and their principal markets were:



- coal (excluding coke and briquettes) — to Japan (59%), the Republic of Korea (9%), and Taiwan (5%);
- wool — to Japan (16%), USSR (13%), and the Netherlands (11%); and
- non-monetary gold — to Japan (29%), Hong Kong (24%) and Singapore (21%).

These statistics and other details of Australian exports by broad commodity group were released last week in *Exports, Australia, Monthly Summary Tables* (5432.0).

Details at a finer level of classification are available from a number of other printed publications and from various microfiche, magnetic tape and floppy disk products. In particular, detailed information is available on a timely basis from the Foreign Trade Special Returns Service in a format tailored to user requirements.

For further information, order the publication *Exports, Australia, Monthly Summary Tables* (5432.0), or contact Information Services on one of the telephone numbers shown on page 10.

All the week's releases: 24 to 30 January

Inquiries

The ABS supplies statistical information:

- through its bookshops
- by mail order (including subscription)
- by facsimile
- electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

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WA (09) 323 5140
SA (08) 237 7100
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Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

The Editor
Statistics Weekly
(062) 52 6917

General

Statistics Weekly, 25 January 1990 (1318.0; \$3.50)
Economic Indicators, NSW, January 1990 (1307.1; \$3.30)
List of Publications, Qld, 1990 (1101.3; free)
Tasmanian Statistical Indicators, January 1990 (1303.6; \$8.00)

Demography

Causes of Death, Qld, 1988 (3302.3; \$12.00)
Causes of Death, SA, 1988 (3306.4; \$7.50)
Estimated Resident Population in Statistical Local Areas, ACT, Preliminary, June 1989 (3205.8; \$5.00)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Imports, Aust., Annual Summary Tables, 1988-89 (5426.0; \$16.50)
Imports, Aust., Monthly Summary Tables, November 1989 (5433.0; \$8.00)
Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., November 1989 (5609.0; \$8.00)
Finance Companies: Assets, Liabilities, Income and Expenditure, Aust., 1987-88 (5616.0; \$3.30)
Cash Management Trusts, Aust., December 1989 (5635.0; \$3.30)
Building Societies, Aust., November 1989 (5637.0; \$8.00)
Finance Companies, Aust., November 1989 (5639.0; \$8.00)

Labour statistics and prices

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (6248.0; \$12.50)
Industrial Disputes, Aust., October 1989 (6321.0; \$5.50)
Export Price Index, Aust., November 1989 (6405.0; \$5.00)
Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, November 1989 (6407.0; \$9.00)
Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, November 1989 (6408.0; \$3.75)
Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Aust., November 1989 (6411.0; \$8.50)
Price Indexes of Articles Produced By Manufacturing Industry, Aust., November 1989 (6412.0; \$6.00)

Secondary industry and distribution

Production Statistics, Aust., December 1989, Preliminary (8301.0; \$5.00)
Production of Food, Drink, Tobacco and Stock and Poultry Food, Aust., August 1989 (8359.0; \$8.50)
Production of Metal Products, Aust., October 1989 (8367.0; \$4.50)
Census of Mining Establishments: Selected Items of Data Classified by Employment Size and Industry Class, Aust., 1987-88 (8410.0; \$4.50) — *final issue*
Sales and Stocks of New Agricultural Machinery, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (8505.0; \$5.00)
Sales of New Construction Machinery and Selected Attachments, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (8506.0; \$3.25)
Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (8782.0; \$8.00)
Tourist Accommodation, Major Hotels and Motels, NSW, December 1989 (8646.1; \$5.00)
Mining, WA, 1987-88 (8404.5; \$11.50)
Tourist Accommodation, WA, September Qtr 1989 (8635.5; \$8.50)
Tourist Accommodation, SA, September Qtr 1989 (8635.4; \$8.50)
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, Tas., October 1989 (8741.6; \$3.00)

Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 13 February 1990

January

31 Consumer Price Index, December Qtr 1989 (6401.0; \$10.00)

February

1 Balance of Payments, Aust., December 1989 (5301.0; \$12.00)

Building Approvals, Aust., December 1989 (8731.0; \$8.50)

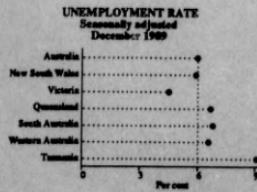
Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Aust., December 1989,
Preliminary (9301.0; \$4.00)

8 The Labour Force, Aust., January 1990, Preliminary (6202.0;
\$8.50)

The Labour Force, Aust. — Preliminary Data on Floppy Disk,
January 1990 (6271.0; \$60.00)

The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to
30 January 1990



	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Sept. qtr 89)*	15.9	24.8	15.2	0.0	45.4	-26.7	n.a.	n.a.	21.1
Retail turnover (Nov. 89) (trend estimate)	11.9	4.6	10.8	5.6	12.0	9.1	n.a.	6.3	9.3
New motor vehicle registrations (Nov. 89)*	8.1	-6.7	0.6	3.6	-13.6	n.a.	31.3	34.9	1.1
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Nov. 89)	-22.9	-27.4	-21.9	0.6	-30.5	4.6	-14.2	-63.1	-22.8
Value of total building work done (June 89)	38.6	42.1	34.4	22.9	54.9	17.4	-8.5	-3.0	36.8
Employed persons (Dec. 89)*	4.1	3.3	6.7	2.4	3.5	6.5	1.5	4.3	4.2
Capital city consumer price index (Sept. qtr 89)	8.1	8.3	7.8	7.6	7.8	7.2	7.0	5.6	8.0
Average weekly earnings (full- time adult ordinary time) (August 89)	10.6	6.9	5.8	7.6	5.8	6.7	4.5	7.5	8.0
Population (June 89)	1.1	1.3	3.2	1.1	3.0	0.6	0.2	1.6	1.6
Room occupancy rates in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 89)	-3.5	-0.7	-12.6	1.5	3.5	4.5	0.9	-10.0	-3.9

* Seasonally adjusted for States (but not Territories)

The latest ...

Key national indicators – consolidated to 30 January 1990

	Period	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
		Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
National production					
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 89	89,803	1.8
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	63,334	0.7
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 89	7,152	0.0
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	5,544	-1.8
Expected new capital expenditure	"	Three months to Dec. 89	8,493	n.a.	11.3
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Nov. 89	7,197	2.2
	— 1984-85 prices	"	Sept. qtr 89	14,280	0.9
New motor vehicle registrations (f)	No.	"	Nov. 89	53,265	-1.0
Dwelling unit approvals (f)	No.	"	Nov. 89	13,235	2.0
Value of all building approvals (f)	\$m	"	"	2,363	-14.2
Value of total building work done (f)	"	June qtr 89	7,622	7.6	36.9
	— current prices	"	"	5,138	4.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	36,369	1.5
Manufacturers' sales	"	Sept. qtr 89	"	35,389	14.0
Expected manufacturers' sales	"	Three months to Dec. 89	37,447	n.a.	9.6
Labour					
Employed persons	'000	Dec. 89	7,941.4	7,845.5	0.0
Unemployment rate †	%	"	5.9	6.0	0.1
Participation rate †	"	"	64.2	63.5	0.0
Job vacancies	'000	Nov. 89	62.7	66.0	-0.6
Average weekly overtime per employee	hours	"	1.6	1.5	-3.0
Prices, profits and wages					
Consumer price index (c)	1980-81 = 100.0	Sept. qtr 89	197.0	n.a.	2.3
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industry	1984-85 = 100.0	Nov. 89	118.0	n.a.	0.2
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1968-69 = 100.0	"	566.6	n.a.	0.6
Company profits before income tax	\$m	Sept. qtr 89	4,846	4,667	-3.6
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$	August 89	508.40	n.a.	1.5
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)					
90-day bank bills †	% per annum	Nov. 89	18.20	n.a.	-0.2
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	"	13.10	n.a.	-0.5
Balance of payments					
Exports of merchandise (f)	\$m	Nov. 89	4,187	4,049	-0.6
Imports of merchandise (f)	"	"	4,521	4,335	0.2
Balance on merchandise trade (c) (f)	"	"	-334	-286	-11.7
Balance of goods and services (c) (f)	"	"	-705	-755	-19.1
Balance on current account (c) (f)	"	"	-1,578	-1,757	-4.2
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0	Sept. qtr 89	n.a.	108.2	-2.8
Foreign investment					
Net foreign debt	\$m	30 Sept. 89	110,329	n.a.	1.9
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	147,716	n.a.	3.5
Exchange rates (monthly average)					
SUS	per \$A	Nov. 89	0.7826	n.a.	1.0
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0	"	60.8	n.a.	1.2
Other indicators					
Population (estimated resident)	million	June 89	16.8	n.a.	0.4
Overseas visitors	'000	Nov. 89	193	170	3.2
					-5.1

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures released Wednesday, 31 January 1990. (f) Later figures released Thursday, 1 February 1990.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 10). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some are final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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